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# HOW TO EVALUATE A MARKETING AGENCY

Assessing Experience, Creative and Cost

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A MOTIVATED MARKETING WHITE PAPER

## EVALUATING A MARKETING AGENCY

A brand's philosophy is the engine behind its success: what it stands for, what drives it, what makes it unique. But unharnessed horsepower can only get a brand so far. Choosing a marketing agency that aligns with the brand philosophy, that can turn raw potential into tangible results, can be tricky - especially for those ill-acquainted with the fast pace of the advertising world.

Choosing an agency too hastily without proper research is the equivalent of setting out for a road trip without first mapping your route. While it's certainly possible that you'll arrive eventually, there's a far better method to reach your destination. The same can be said for agency selection.

It's true that each agency may have its merits, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's the best match for your brand. It's crucial that a brand truly understands what an agency stands for in order to avoid lost time down the road.

*Does the agency's philosophy match yours? Are they committed to their clients' success - not just in word, but in practice? Do their creative endeavors justify their cost, and will you get the most bang for your advertising budget?*

These questions will get you thinking along the right lines, helping to investigate three aspects of a potential partner: experience, creative and cost.

## FINDING EXPERTS IN YOUR INDUSTRY

Start by looking for agencies that are considered experts in your industry. Have they worked with companies that are similar to yours? Have they launched successful marketing campaigns within your industry?

Because advertising standards vary from one industry to the next, and even within the same industry, selecting an agency with the specific expertise you're seeking isn't as easy as it may seem. To highlight this further, let's discuss some differentiating factors in the automotive, health care and legal sectors. An experienced marketing agency will have the following:

### **Automotive**

- Thorough understanding of co-op guidelines and approval process
- Ability to perform quick turnarounds
- Quality creative to match monthly sale events

### **Health Care**

- Comprehensive branding strategy to promote name recognition and build trust
- Knowledge of relevant HIPAA laws and regulations
- Ability to maintain cohesion across platforms

### **Legal**

- Solid understanding of legal constraints on marketing copy (restricted terminology, etc)
- Ability to craft messaging that targets potential clients before they're actively searching for services
- Analytic capabilities to evaluate a campaign's success

Pointing out these differences proves that finding an agency whose industry knowledge matches your needs is a deciding factor in future success. Clearly the above is a generalization of each industry and merely provides some structure to keep your agency search on track.

## CHOOSING CREATIVES TO CALL YOUR OWN

The strength of an agency's portfolio should influence your decision significantly, but simply looking at the creative work they're most proud of leaves out an integral part of the equation.

Yes, an agency's work is good. Yes, it's aesthetically pleasing. But does their design and production style match your brand? Were the featured ads effective? Did they achieve the desired results? Remember, just because an ad looks pretty doesn't mean it will resonate with consumers in your specific industry.

Companies with defined branding must find an agency that can maintain consistency while driving the brand forward. But for companies that haven't gotten to the logo creation stage yet, or haven't progressed much past it, the bulk of the branding work still lies ahead.

Aside from the agency's paid work for clients, check to see if they're regularly putting out content of their own, like informative blog posts, videos and infographics. These reveal the strength of the agency's copywriting, production and design teams - and confirms that they're using the most innovative tools available.

## GETTING THE BEST FOR YOUR BUDGET

There's a staggering difference between "cheap" and "cost effective." And while choosing the cheapest option is beneficial in some cases, hiring an ad agency is not one of them. After all, you get what you pay for.

Launching a marketing campaign is a big investment, so it's crucial to trust that your agency is giving you the most bang for your buck. Before diving into ROIs and analytics, determine your brand's advertising budget and what you hope to achieve with it.

Not all marketing strategies are created equal - or with the same end goal in mind. Some are designed purely to drive sales, others are focused on raising awareness. Some are geared toward existing customers, others' purpose is to bring in new business. Once your brand has set goals, look for an agency with a strong history of helping other brands attain similar ones while staying on budget.



## PARTNERING WITH MOTIVATED MARKETING

Motivated Marketing partners with brands every step of the way, providing the strategy, creative content and support needed to get results that exceed expectation. Our team works hard to provide the most compelling creative, always keeping budget in mind. With experience that spans multiple industries, focused mainly on the automotive, health care and legal sectors, we're equipped to shift your brand's success into overdrive.

**If you are currently evaluating marketing agencies and aren't sure about which step to take next, or if you'd like to explore Motivated Marketing's philosophy further, give us a call at (843)856-7322 or email [info@motivatedmarketing.com](mailto:info@motivatedmarketing.com).**

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